

# Dharma Rain Zen Center

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2022 via Zoom

**Present:** Kakumyo Lowe-Charde; Carrie Schultz; Alice Chan; Jean Renso Bond; Sam Murphy; Todd Tsuho Sattersten.

**Absent:** Stacy Zonnyo Riger; Rick Hogetsu Mitchell

**Quorum:** Met

December minutes have been approved.

The next meeting will be 27 January 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

### Update Previous Action Items:

The board secretary, Hogetsu, is absent, so the list of previous action items was not at hand for the meeting.

### Member concerns:

Elizabeth Erin Luthy sent an email to the board and the Health and Safety Council asking about the possibility of online programming for those not comfortable with attending events at Dharma Rain. Kakumyo spoke with Erin about this, and has brought it up with the Dharma Council. Kakumyo said Erin's concern especially targeted the mid-day time slot. Kakumyo said that we would look at possibilities for remote-friendly programming for that time slot, but it may or may not happen.

## Subcommittees:

**Financial report:** As of December, our net revenue is \$84,385, which gives us 3-4 months of operating budget in reserve. This puts DRZC in a good enough position to hire for a part-time gardener position, if the board decides it's aligned with our mission.

**Siskiyou Cohousing:** Kakumyo reports that this issue is now resolved, and we can probably remove it from the regular agenda. We regained full control of the Siskiyou Cohousing land for \$500k, which the Center started paying over the summer. In November, DRZC made a \$100k balloon payment, leaving Dharma Rain owing about \$400k to cohousing members. Regular recurring payments will be made on the remaining debt.

**DE&I:** DRZC signed a contract with Tusk Consulting for DEI training. The kickoff meeting is scheduled for January. Kakumyo said he anticipates a few planning meetings, with the trainings happening in the spring.

**Membership:** Kakumyo reports that the membership committee is up to date with new member letters and is updating the member signs in the Sodo. Along with Kakumyo, Minshu and Ansui serve on this committee, but Minshu and Ansui are no longer on the board. Minshu and Ansui are both willing to continue serving on the Membership subcommittee to maintain the current membership needs. If the board decides to do more around membership, such as a membership drive, we will need to add board members to the subcommittee. Membership is at 225, which Tsuho and Kakumyo think might be a high point for sangha membership; Kakumyo says it is higher than our pre-pandemic membership. Kakumyo also informed new board members that DRZC recently added volunteer membership, in which members could serve Dharma Rain for three hours per month in lieu of donation.

**Health and Safety:** Kakumyo reports that the Health and Safety Committee is in disagreement about whether our policy for attendance should require vaccination (only *or* vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test. The committee hopes to resolve this disagreement soon. At this time, participants need to show proof of vaccination to be in the hall. Carrie asked what if we require boosters to consider someone "fully vaccinated," and Kakumyo said we are not asking the greeters, who verify proof of vaccination, to go into that level of detail.

In December, the board said that they'd like the temple to be more open, and decided to raise the attendance cap and permit chanting in the hall, with masks. The HSC decided that the spike in the new Omicron variant overruled that board decision, so we've tightened restrictions again. This is a short term measure to deal with the surge.

**Buildings and grounds:** Yuton is no longer on staff, and Zonnyo will be absent for three months. Kakumyo says that makes staffing a bit tight, but the grounds and buildings are in good shape for winter. In addition, the Hojo is nearly completed and should be ready for a late February move-in date.

## New business

**New board positions:** The board needs to select a new chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary, but Zonnyo and Hogetsu are not present. After some discussion, we will hold a short board meeting on January 27th to decide this.

Zonnyo has been serving as the treasurer and is willing to continue, but she will be gone for three months. The board members present will reflect on what positions they would like to take on.

**Garden position:** Carrie raised the question of whether the garden factors into our values and our mission enough to pay for this position. Gabe invested a lot of time in it, and the maintenance has become a bit more intensive.

After the previous board meeting, Kakumyo drafted an entry-level position for the garden. Tsuho suggests funding it for a year or a growing season, and suggests that one of the goals should be to re-connect the garden to sangha and practice. The board agreed to go ahead with this plan, and after the growing season, we can evaluate whether the goals have been met and how we want to proceed.

**Retirement plan legality:** Kakumyo has gotten information that employers in Oregon have to offer retirement plans for all employees. We offer one only for the abbot. It's important to stay within compliance, and Dharma Rain wants to be a good employer, so we need to find out if this applies to DRZC. Sam agreed to research this, and Tsuho will reach out to legal contacts to learn what he can as well.

**Dharma Garden council:** At the board retreat this year, the board reorganized the Dharma Rain's council structure to make it more clear, but the Dharma Garden council

got only minor updates. Kakumyo reports that the Dharma Garden council is now going through organizational documents to work on some of the structure there.

## Action items:

Sam and Tsuho will look into whether we are required to offer retirement plans for our employees.

Kakumyo will get the garden position posted.

The board will select members for new board positions in the meeting on Jan 27.

The meeting adjourned around 8:30 p.m. Respectfully submitted by Jean Rensō Bond, interim board secretary.